

Missouri House of Representatives

Dennis Bonner

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April 17, 2002

The Hon. Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 – 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20544

Re: FCC Docket # 01-348

Dear Commissioner Powell:

Today's satellite technology makes it possible for consumers and businesses to have a third option for video/data/Internet services – an option that allows us an alternative to the government-protected monopolies of phone companies and cable TV.

So why on earth would our government be interested in restricting these new technological possibilities? The proposed merger between EchoStar Communications Corp. (the Dish Network) and Hughes Electronics Corp. (DirecTV), which is pending before the Department of Justice and the FCC, would bring the benefits of Direct Satellite Broadcast to all 210 markets in the U.S., as opposed to the 40 or so markets they now serve.

Think of it: In areas where cable service now controls 80 percent of the pay TV market, plus its stranglehold on broadband Internet access, the new EchoStar will be able to provide meaningful competition for cable and phone companies. And in rural areas that do not have cable service, the expansion of EchoStar's services will bring 21st Century information technologies to businesses and residents who simply do not have it now.

Please support the Dish/DirecTV merger. By generating economies of scale, the merged company will be able to bring all Americans, not just the fortunate few, the advantages of today's information technology.

Yours truly,

Representative Dennis Bonner
District 51